

Problems of the Day

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amples Mr. Gould adduces to support his case, his conclusions are essentially unreliable, for he forgets that the ancient Greeks, the intellectual giants of history, were a blend of two prehistoric races; that the ancient Hebrews, likewise of foremost intellectual caliber, are believed to have been a compound of two peoples; that the Normans, one of the finest races of modern times, are known to have been of mixed blood, and that the French, the Anglo-Saxons, and practically all other groups of men, have an ancestry that includes many racial strains.

Turning to books that deal more directly with the industrial problem we may mention Whiting Williams's "Horny Hands and Hampered Elbows," a discussion of the mind of the worker in western Europe. The conclusion reached by Mr. Williams is that the worker in Europe toils harder than does his brother in America, that in return he receives less in the way of comforts and even of necessities, and that, largely because of the plight of labor, Europe has need both of the good will of America and of our intelligent cooperation. Somewhat more vital, because the problem it deals with is a vaster one, is A. A. Heller's volume on "Industrial Revival in Soviet Russia," a far sighted and discerning account of conditions in the land of the Communist. "The Russian revolution," declares the author, "will go down in history as the most profound and far reaching social upheaval since the fall of the Roman Empire, and it claimed a surprisingly small number of victims for so widespread and serious a struggle." The revolution is still in progress, but the destructive stage is over and the constructive stage has begun. Though it may require a generation before it runs its course this is really but a small period for so fundamental a social change; and, meanwhile, those who rail at the Communists for not having achieved perfection only demonstrate their failure to apprehend the vastness of the problem. Actually, except in the famine ridden areas, the Russian peasant is now better off than under the Czars; and there is no doubt, the author indicates, that his lot will gradually improve as the process of reconstruction continues.

Of the three remaining books two are of but casual interest for the general reader, and therefore may be passed over with but brief mention. Prof. Gillette's volume on "Rural Sociology" is what the title implies—a carefully compiled and comprehensive study of the social, economic, sanitary, agricultural, educational and religious problems of country districts. Likewise, Prof. Perlman's "History of Trade Unionism in the United States" is what the title implies; the author discusses minutely the development of American trade unions from the earliest days until the present, and reaches the conclusion that the unions in this country have tended to be conservative and that, therefore, "the hope of American Bolshevism will . . . continue to rest with the will of the employers to rule as autocrats."

Last, but certainly not least, is Dallas Lore Sharp's slender but acute and thoughtful volume on "Education in a Democracy." This consists of four essays, which vigorously condemn current educational tendencies, which make a plea for more public education and indict that negation of democracy known as the private school. Prof. Sharp observes a dangerous trend toward educational snobbishness and aristocracy; combined with this he sees a no less dangerous tendency toward commercialism; he finds that the academic courses instill knowledge in a machine made, mechanical fashion; that those which purport to give a commercial education are sheer absurdities; while those offering a vocational training are but the expression of a German desire for efficiency, a material efficiency which has no more to do with true education than buzzsaws have to do with Plato. As a remedy the author proposes that all high school students be compelled to take a uniform course looking neither toward college nor toward business nor toward a vocation, but instilling the rudiments of those broad and cultural subjects without an acquaintance with which no man can claim to be educated.

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